

Ms. Mary Blanco, Board Member

Co-Sponsors: Mr. Daniel Espino, Vice Chair
 Mr. Roberto J. Alonso
 Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall
 Ms. Monica Colucci
 Dr. Steve Gallon III
 Ms. Luisa Santos

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SUBJECT: MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS COLLEGE KICK-OFF TASK FORCE

COMMITTEE: ACADEMICS, INNOVATION, EVALUATION, & TECHNOLOGY

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN: RELEVANT, RIGOROUS, & INNOVATIVE ACADEMICS

Planning for post-secondary education can be a complicated and intimidating process for high school students without the proper resources and guidance. A typical school year can be stressful for all high school students as they balance their time and effort among their schoolwork, family responsibilities, relationships, jobs, and varied extracurricular activities. Senior year can be an extraordinarily overwhelming time in a student’s life, especially for those applying to college. High school seniors must make big decisions about their future as they navigate an unfamiliar and highly competitive college admissions landscape, while also determining how to finance their education.

The college application process can be tedious. Students must spend time discerning what schools to apply to, complete college applications, finalize standardized testing, complete applications for scholarships and financial aid, request letters of recommendation, and write personal essays, supplements, and resumes. Most of these tasks must often be completed in the first few months of senior year, as many universities have early application deadlines of October 15th and November 1st. If students miss these early deadlines, their chances of acceptance may diminish greatly.

While numerous resources exist for students through the county’s College Assistance Program and from each high school’s College Advisor, many high school seniors may find it difficult to get started with the college application process without direct and early assistance. Seniors planning to apply to college would benefit from receiving this assistance during the summer, prior to the start of senior year, before their academic and extracurricular schedule begins.

This Board item seeks to request that the Superintendent of Schools establish a College Kick-Off Task Force to review the feasibility of developing a voluntary summer workshop for high school seniors planning on applying to college. This task force would develop a potential plan on how to provide direct instruction to rising high school seniors during an interactive summer workshop. This summer workshop should also review the potential to provide instruction with a hands-on opportunity for rising seniors to complete online college applications as well as instruction on how to use their school’s college platform to request letters of recommendation and requests for transcripts.

This item has been reviewed and approved by the General Counsel's Office as to form and legal sufficiency.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
MS. MARY BLANCO:**

That the School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorize the Superintendent of Schools to:

1. Appoint the membership of College Kick-Off Task Force to include a representative from School Operations; a Region Superintendent; three school principals (one from each region); three CAP counselors (one from each region); a representative from the United Teacher of Dade; and other members as identified by the Superintendent of Schools for the purpose of:
 - a) Exploring the feasibility of implementing a voluntary summer workshop for incoming high school seniors planning on applying to college. This task force will explore the potential development of a plan for the summer workshop to be interactive, if appropriate. This workshop would provide instruction with a hands-on opportunity for students to complete online college applications, as well as instruction on how to use their school's college platform to request letters of recommendation and requests for transcripts;
 - b) Exploring the identification of appropriate funding in support of the implementation of this workshop, including the assignment of staff;
 - c) Develop and review a potential plan on how such a workshop, if implemented, can be promoted and how students can be enrolled in the workshop;
2. appoint the Chair of the Task Force; and
3. provide a report of the Task Force findings at the Academics, Innovation, Evaluation, & Technology meeting of May 10, 2023.